

California State Library

**SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES**

**PROGRAM II**

**Grant Guidelines**

March 2004

There are 2.5 million small businesses in California, which employ 50% of the state's workforce and generate more than half of its gross domestic product. These small businesses are crucial to California's economy, yet the overwhelming majority employ less than 10 people and lack access to a corporate librarian.

This Small Business Services – Program II seeks to address the information needs of business people by offering support to public libraries to enhance their services to this clientele. The small business community itself must be involved in the planning and development of the local program.

**I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

To expand and enhance information services for Californians owning or working in small businesses.

**II. ELIGIBILITY**

**A. Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants are California public libraries. Eligible applicants may also have other appropriate organizations – the Chamber of Commerce, a local college providing business courses, etc. – as partners in the project, provided that the lead agency is the library.

**B. Eligible Projects**

Eligible projects involve the initiation, expansion, or enhancement of information services for people who own or work in small businesses. It is anticipated that the focus will be on businesses employing nine or fewer people, but a case can be made for using a higher cut-off point, up to 250 employees.

## **SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES – PROGRAM II**

Projects may involve:

- reference services, on-site and remote
- training
- promotional outreach
- other activities suitable for the project

### **C. Eligible Costs**

Any costs essential to the project are eligible funding, except the following: ongoing library operations, fundraising, library construction, and individual research.

## **III. FUNDING**

It is anticipated that up to \$200,000 will be awarded under this program. Individual awards to a library may range from a minimum of \$50,000 to a maximum of \$75,000. The State Library reserves the right to award fewer than three grants or to award less than \$200,000 if too few grant applications meet the criteria. The funding source is the federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), administered in California by the State Librarian.

Matching funds and in-kind contributions are not required but will increase the competitiveness of the grant application.

## **IV. EVALUATION AND SELECTION**

Grant applications will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- Anticipated value of the project as a demonstration for other libraries
- Involvement of the client group (i.e., people who own or work in local small businesses) in the preparation and implementation of the project
- Clearly-defined and achievable goals, objectives, and timelines for the project
- Adequacy and realism of budget and cost estimates

## SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES – PROGRAM II

- Demonstrated commitment to the project as indicated by the degree of pre-planning, matching funds, in-kind contributions, and continuation plan
- Geographic distribution of the grant recipients insofar as possible
- Innovativeness of service approach
- Quality of evaluation plan, with priority given to those encompassing outcome measures (i.e., measuring direct impacts on the users as contrasted with the quantity of use)
- Anticipated value of the services for small businesses

### V. APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND TIMELINE

- A. Five (5) copies of the application must be received by the California State Library no later than 4:00 pm on June 10, 2004; one copy must be the original containing the original signature. Submission by fax or email is unacceptable.
- B. The library must certify compliance with the provisions of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Read the Overview, follow the Public Library Guidelines, complete Form A, and submit along with application.
- C. **Awards** will be announced on July 1, 2004. The project period begins immediately upon notification of grant award.
- D. **Projects** must be completed by August 31, 2005. (NOTE: this extended project period is to allow grant recipients to have a full year for the projects, since a late state budget affects the State Library's ability to award grants.) All funds must be expended by that August date or returned.

### VI. INFORMATION

See detailed instructions on completing the application form. For additional information or consultative assistance, contact:

Barbara Will, Library Programs Consultant

Telephone: (916) 653-7071      Fax: (916) 653-8443      Email: [bwill@library.ca.gov](mailto:bwill@library.ca.gov)

6382